

IN THE CLAIMS:

1-5 (Canceled)

6. (Original) An open patient care unit, comprising:

a bed;

an inner air discharge channel positioned parallel to said bed;

an outer air discharge channel extending in parallel to said inner discharge channel at

5 least over some sections of said inner air discharge channel;

an air purgative suction unit arranged above said bed, said inner air discharge channel

and said outer air discharge channel being directed toward said air purgative suction unit;

a first fan for delivering ambient air for discharge from said outer air discharge channel;

and

10 a second fan for delivering air, which is conditioned in terms of humidity and/or temperature, for discharge from said inner air discharge channel.

7. (Original) An open patient care unit in accordance with claim 6, wherein the velocity of the air being discharged from said inner air discharge channel and said outer discharge channel is 10 cm to 80 cm per second, and a ratio of a velocity of air being discharged from said outer air discharge channels to a velocity of said air flow being discharged from said inner discharge channel ranges from about 1:2 to 1:3.

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8. (Original) An open patient care unit in accordance with claim 6, wherein a temperature and a relative humidity of the air leaving said outer air discharge channel corresponds to a temperature and a relative humidity of the ambient air, and relative humidity of air leaving said inner air discharge channel is 35% to 85%, and a corresponding temperature of air leaving said inner air discharge channel is 28°C to 39°C.

9. (Original) An open patient care unit in accordance with claim 6, wherein temperature of air being discharged from said outer air discharge channel is cooler than temperature of ambient air and warmer than said inner discharge channel.

10. (Original) An open patient care unit in accordance with claim 6, wherein air flow velocity discharged from said outer air discharge is greater than air flow velocity of said inner discharge channel.

11. (Original) An open patient care unit in accordance with claim 6, further comprising another air purgative suction unit, said bed having longitudinal sides and lateral sides wherein air purgative suction unit extends in a longitudinal direction substantially in parallel to said longitudinal sides and said another air purgative suction unit is arranged above one of said lateral sides of said bed.

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12. (Original) An open patient care unit in accordance with claim 6, further comprising

a vertical wall, said bed having longer sides and shorter sides wherein said air purgative suction unit is arranged above and in parallel to one of said shorter sides of said bed and said vertical wall limits said outer air discharge channel from the environment in an area above said one of said shorter sides, over a section of said one of said shorter sides.

13. (Original) An open patient care unit comprising:

a bed;

an inner air discharge channel positioned parallel over some sections of said bed;

an outer air discharge channel, wherein said air discharge channels extend adjacent to
5 said inner air discharge over a section of said bed;

an air purgative suction unit arranged above said bed;

a first fan delivering gas for discharge as a first gas flow from said outer air discharge channel; and

10 a second gas fan delivering gas for discharge as a second gas flow from said inner air discharge channel, said inner air discharge channel and said outer air discharge channel being directed such that said first gas flow and said second gas flow converge toward said air purgative suction unit; and

a gas conditioning means for conditioning the gas for said second gas flow in terms of at least one of humidity and temperature.

14. (Original) An open patient care unit in accordance with claim 13, wherein said gas

conditioning means includes a heater for controlling a temperature of said second gas flow.

15. (Original) An open patient care unit in accordance with claim 13, wherein said gas conditioning means includes a humidifier for controlling a humidity of said second gas flow.

16. (Original) An open patient care unit in accordance with claim 13, wherein said first gas flow discharged from said outer air discharge channel and said second gas flow discharged from said second inner air discharge channel have an air discharge velocity of 10 cm to 80 cm per second and a velocity ratio of said first gas flow discharged from said outer air discharge channel to said second gas flow discharged from said inner discharge channel range from 1:2 to 1:3.

17. (Original) An open patient care unit in accordance with claim 13, wherein said gas conditioning means includes a heating means and a humidifying means and controls a temperature and a humidity of a space above said bed to attain a preset temperature and a preset humidity by humidifying and heating said second gas flow and regulating the humidifying and heating as function of temperature and humidity of ambient air.

18. (Original) An open patient care unit in accordance with claim 13, wherein said gas conditioning means includes a heating means and a humidifying means and said second gas flow is humidity controlled by said humidifying means and is temperature controlled by said

heating means and a temperature and a relative humidity of said first gas flow leaving said outer air discharge channels correspond to a temperature and a relative humidity of ambient air, and a relative humidity of said second gas flow leaving said inner air discharge channels is 35% to 85%, and a corresponding temperature of said second gas flow is 28°C to 39°C.

19. (Original) An open patient care unit in accordance with claim 13, wherein said bed has longitudinal sides extending in a longitudinal direction and has lateral sides extending in a lateral direction and wherein said air purgative suction unit extends in said longitudinal direction of said bed.

20. (Original) An open patient care unit in accordance with claim 19, wherein said air purgative suction unit is arranged above and in parallel to said longitudinal sides of said bed.

21. (Original) An open patient care unit in accordance with claim 13, wherein said bed has longitudinal sides extending in a longitudinal direction and has lateral sides extending in lateral direction and wherein said air purgative suction unit extends in said lateral direction of said bed.

22. (Original) An open patient care unit in accordance with claim 13, further comprising;

another purgative suction unit, wherein said bed has longitudinal sides extending in a

longitudinal direction and has lateral sides extending in a lateral direction and wherein said air purgative suction unit extends in the longitudinal direction of said bed and said another air purgative suction unit is arranged extending in the lateral direction of said bed.

23. (Original) An open patient care unit in accordance with claim 19, further comprising a wall, said bed having longer sides and shorter sides wherein said air purgative suction unit is arranged above and in parallel to one of said shorter sides of said bed and said wall limits said outer air discharge channel from the environment in an area above said one of
5 said shorter sides, over a section of said one of said shorter sides.